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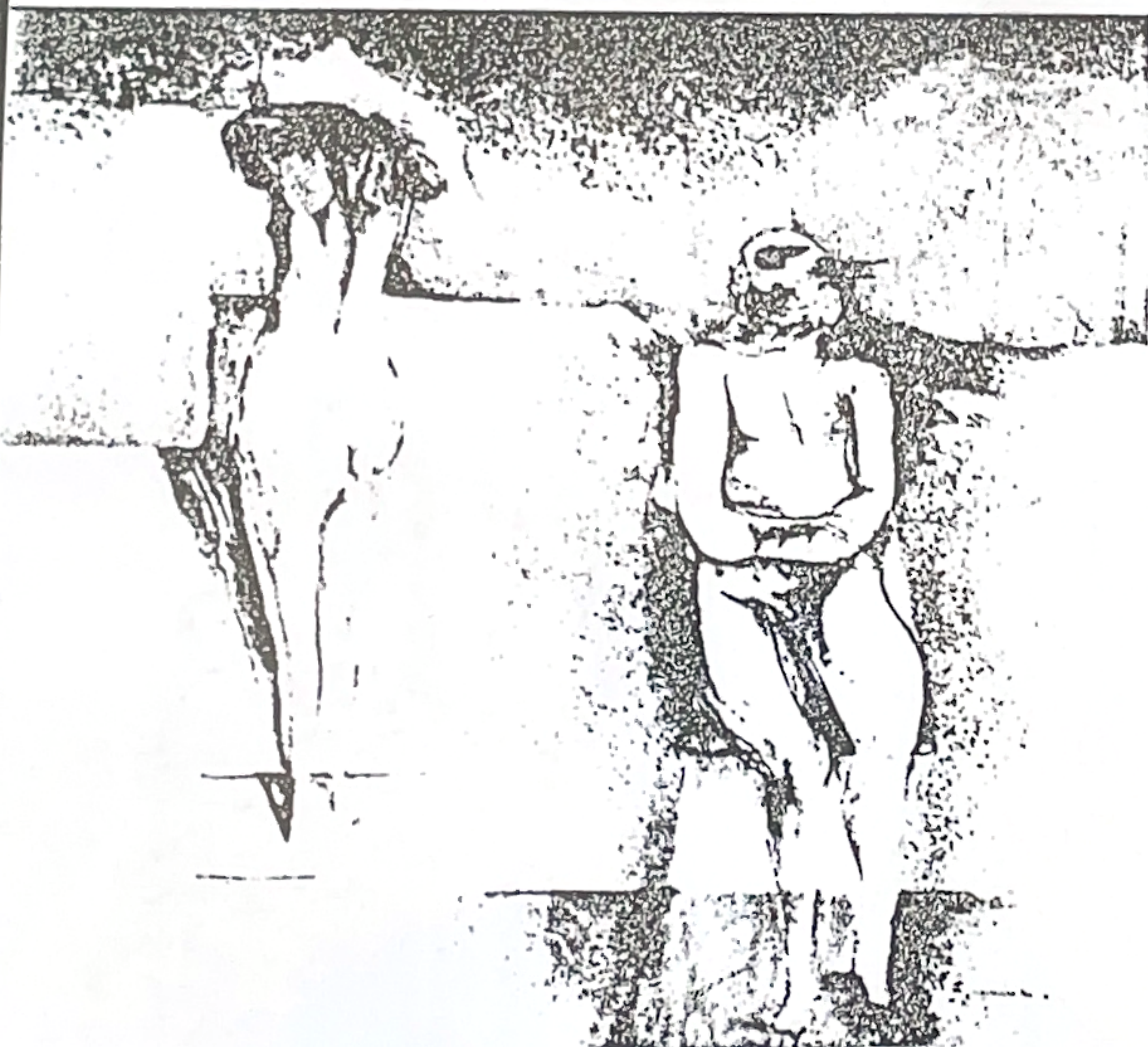
Although Karin Jaroszynska has lived permanently in this country for a good many years, her work as a painter is comparatively little known. She has exhibited on group shows, but is giving her first one-man show at the Lidchi Gallery this month.

I myself did not come to know her work at all until about five or six months ago; and my first encounter with it came as a surprise and a revelation. Here, I thought to myself as she showed me perhaps a score of her paintings, is an artist of such brilliance, that her first one-man show (for which she was already working) must blaze in the firmament of South African art. Yet 'brilliant' is not an apt word; and 'blaze', which I of course use metaphorically, is not the right word if it implies that Karin Jaroszynska is an artist who dazzles in the literal sense — by bright or flamboyant colour or a startling technique.

On the contrary. Her colours range from the delicate and lucent to the mysterious and sombre; her technique, which in these pictures is figurative because they all (or nearly all) are conceived in terms of the human figure, is subtle and allusive.

These paintings are not those of an amateur: they are not a first flight. Karin Jaroszynska received an excellent professional training at Helsinki, and this exhibition has been preceded by years of hard, honest work. She has not sought an easy way out for herself, by resorting to hit-or-miss experiments in the current idiom. Highly self-critical, she has allowed her abounding talent no indulgence; and in the process of wrestling with her angel, she has achieved an originality and profundity of statement which make her perhaps the most impressive younger artist at present working in this country.

Although these paintings have an underlying theme — which can without grandiloquence be called the state of the human soul — they are not simply repetitive statements of the theme. Each statement is also a new and different exploration, and a new discovery. Apart altogether from the sureness and delicacy, from the technical skill, of these paintings, they are very impressive and deeply moving because of their range of passion and compassion. Sad and often sombre in mood, they nevertheless glow with insights into humanity which are not often found with such subtle intensity in South African painting. Karin Jaroszynska is a humanist and perhaps a mystic: but in these, no doubt, unfashionable qualities lie the virtues that make her the outstanding artist she is. She is a painter whose achievements are already so high, that one dare hardly predict her future I believe it will be in the highest degree remarkable.



KARIN JAROSZYNSKA

Charles Eglington

Jaroszynska
Karin

KARIN

Karin Jaroszynska's paintings are such an unusual and original nature that in appraising her work one sees instinctively to classify it, to discover its roots and apparent niche in the realm of art.

Pigeon-holing painters is a favourite and often dangerous occupation for critics; dangerous for the artist because it might type him but more so for the critic because it indicates his satisfaction with the comparatively easy method of assessing an artist's achievements merely by labelling him, thus assuming that the reader will supply the analysis from his own knowledge of the given tabulation.

While conscious of these pit-falls the writer dares to suggest that Karin Jaroszynska has some affinity with the short-lived Metaphysical School, like Chirico in that she "clothes the idea in sensitive form", is aware of the joys and sorrows present in "a portico within the walls of a room, or inside a box" and is concerned with the philosophy of being and knowing.

Deeply moved while still a child by Dante's Divine Comedy she treats the spiritual state of man in his environment with a depth of feeling which leaves one awed by her concept of the majesty and tragedy of man. The near-human figures inhabiting her canvases move in the symbolical small area of their immediate environment or step out hesitantly, with hunched shoulders and closely hunched arms into silent landscapes illuminated by a light which is neither of the day nor of the night.

Many of her sensitively drawn figures convey the same agony of remorse and sense of loneliness as those in Masaccio's Expulsion from the Garden, while others muse in a state of serene calm reminiscent of Greek statuary — all have an anonymity which at times verges on the macabre.

Karin Jaroszynska uses her superb technical knowledge with imagination, fascinating the spectator with her manipulation of planes and lines in perspective which may suddenly change direction, creating pockets of space within space. Her painting is one of the most important attributes of significant work — the aim



refinable power of attracting the
ver to assess and reassess the
lities which first drew him to a
sideration of the canvas.

haunting mysticism of her work is
ected not only by content but also
the choice of a subdued palette and
subtle use of tone and texture. The
ic strength of her canvases, how-
r, lies in the fact that on analysis
compositions resolve into a few
ple, instinctively balanced geo-
tric forms arranged in infinitely
ied juxtaposition.

rin Jaroszynska owes much to her
sonal heritage as a Finn, to her
nily background of musicians and
ists and to her thorough training at
Helsinki Academy of Fine Art at
age of fifteen — the youngest
dent ever to have been admitted to
Academy.

cently Karin Jaroszynska was
noured by her native country when
work was accepted for an exhibi-
n, in Helsinki, of Finnish artists
road. Other important collections
ich have acquired her paintings
clude the Anglo American Corpora-
n in New York and the National
allery in Cape Town.

or fourth one-man show, which was
ld in the Goodman Gallery in May,
as a consolidation of the impact
hich her work made last year and
ould add considerably to her unde-
able position as one of South
frica's most significant artists. ●

